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The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Letter dated 18 January 2000 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you the text of a statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated 17 January 2000 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda items 50 and 160.

(*Signed*) S. Lavrov

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Annex

Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation dated 17 January 2000

As is generally known, Mullah M. Omar, the leader of the Afghan faction known as the Taliban, during a meeting in Kandahar with Chechen emissaries led by Z. Yandarbiev, announced the Taliban's recognition of Chechnya as an independent State.

It goes without saying that such a step by the Taliban, which seized power in Afghanistan by force, is legally null and void.

From the political standpoint, this statement by an illegal regime which is not recognized by the international community, a regime against which the United Nations has imposed sanctions because of the support by the Taliban of international terrorism, once again testifies to the link between the terrorists in Chechnya and the forces of militant religious extremism, above all in Afghanistan.

It is appropriate to point out that the Security Council resolution imposing international anti-terrorist sanctions against the Taliban with effect from 14 November 1999 provides for the possibility of further, stricter measures. The open support of the Taliban for terrorists who are active in a territory which is part of the Russian Federation is a further blatant challenge to the whole international community and provides serious grounds for raising the question of the imposition of stricter sanctions against the Taliban.

In the view of the Russian Federation, the action of the Taliban, leading to the establishment of its own type of international banditry, once again underlines the urgent need for the forces of the international community to unite to combat the universal evil of terrorism.